OTHER NOTICES

Grant, Verne. *The Origin of Adaptations.* New York and London, 1964, Columbia University Press. Pp. x + 606.

THIS IS MORE than just another book on the topic on account of the emphasis placed on drift, and large changes in selection pressure and inbreeding as causes of change in small populations. The author accepts these as means whereby small isolated groups diverge slightly from each other and he supposes that competition between such groups subsequently becomes possible. This is of especial interest because human evolution very likely proceeded in this way. This extensive text is written by a botanist with an especial knowledge of plant species in California; it is a competent and thorough account of the theory of natural selection. There are sections on population genetics and on the taxonomic and ecological backgrounds to the understanding of speciation. The final section covers macroevolution; most of the examples and argument, in this section and elsewhere, are not strikingly new but are admirably presented. There is next to nothing on the cytological or biochemical aspects. The level is aimed somewhere between that of a student's text and a graduate student's reference book.

G. A. HORRIDGE

John, Audrey L., Leite-Ribeiro, Maria O. and **Buckle, Donald.** *The Nurse in Mental Health Practice: Report on a Technical Conference.* Geneva, 1963. World Health Organization. Public Health Papers, No. 22. Pp. 212. Price 12s. Obtainable through H.M.S.O.

A CONFERENCE ON the nurse in mental health practice was held in Copenhagen in 1961. The participants, who came from Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Holland, Israel, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S.S.R., represented the fields of psychiatry, psychiatric nursing, public health nursing, nursing education, social anthropology, psychology and statistics. Each participant contributed a paper which was circulated before the Conference met, and these were discussed in small groups and in plenary sessions; a summary of the Conference's views was then discussed and approved.

This Report has been prepared by three of those who took part in the Conference, which covered the role of the nurse in relation to social and cultural attitudes and to modern views and practices in the treatment of mental illness.

Earlier WHO conferences and groups have emphasized that, in psychiatric nursing, skills could be improved by a better understanding of many everyday details of patient care, and that nursing education needs reorganization so that psychiatric nurses may learn to adapt themselves successfully to changing methods of treatment. This Conference therefore focused its attention on the exact role of the nurse in mental health practice and examined the whole spectrum of nursing education from this angle.

Two annexes to the Report occupy almost two-thirds of the book. The first, by Dr. A. N. Oppenheim of the Department of Social Psychology at the London School of Economics, assisted by Ulrikka Trolle, contains an analysis of the information received from twenty-four European countries on national nursing resources and education, with special reference to psychiatric nursing; the other, by Dr. Audrey L. John, S.R.N., University of Edinburgh, and Maria Leite-Ribeiro, S.R.N., WHO Regional Nursing Officer, of Copenhagen, consists of a report on the functions and attitudes of psychiatric nurses, based on pilot studies in Denmark and Great Britain.

K. H.

Lenz, Widukind. *Medical Genetics: An Introduction to Medical Genetics for Physicians and Medical Students.* Trs. *Elisabeth F. Lanzl.* Chicago and London, 1963, The University of Chicago Press. Pp. xiv + 218. Price 48s.

THIS IS AN excellent text book which to the reader in this country immediately suggests a comparison with Fraser Roberts's *An Introduction to Medical Genetics.* The author acknowledges his indebtedness in the preface, and there are many resemblances including an index of definitions which in this book has been extended to an extremely useful separate list of terms with explanations as might be found in a dictionary.

There is a general introduction which deals

with the significance of human genetics for the sciences of man and the genetic aspects of medicine. One chapter is devoted to the nature of genes and gives a lucid explanation of the concepts of autosomal and sex determined inheritance, and also discussed DNA and RNA. Another chapter describes the effects of genes including such aspects as the significance of consanguineous marriages. There are other chapters on mutations and gene effects which include helpful discussions of polygenic inheritance and of twin studies.

The illustrations are well chosen and there is a bibliography of relevant literature. In addition to the appendix dealing with genetic terms already mentioned, there is also a medical glossary. As in Fraser Roberts's book the examples are nearly all taken from medicine and though no important aspect is left undiscussed, the reader is not expected to have any prior knowledge of genetics. H. LEHMANN

Moore, J. A. *Heredity and Development.* New York, 1963 (London, 1964). Oxford University Press. Pp. iv + 245. Price 16s. Paperback.

ABOUT FIVE-EIGHTHS of this paperback are devoted to a conventional account of the history of genetics, beginning with Darwin on "pangenesis." Three chapters on cytology lead to Mendel and the rediscovery of his work in 1900. Much of the rest of this part deals with "Mendelism" and its development, but it ends with two chapters on DNA and all that. There is no discussion of population genetics, or of the analysis of "the gene" by the use of micro-organisms, though these are two of the major modern outgrowths of the subject.

The rest of the book consists of four chapters on embryology. There is an account of the development of amphibia in two chapters, followed by one very oddly given up to a summary of the now discarded theory of the "organizer." Finally, there is a brief note on the role of the nucleus in development (nuclear transplantation, Briggs and King, and all that). Apart from the ten pages on this topic there is no attempt to relate genetics and embryology—which is disappointing. There is no discussion of "Lamarckism" and its modern offshoots, although—as P. B. Medawar has shown—there is much worth saying.

The writing is clear, though wordy, and is suitable for sixth-formers studying biology. There is, however, some lack of precision. There is confusion, for instance, on the definitions of "mitosis" and "meiosis": these are most conveniently defined as kinds of *nuclear* division, not cell division. It is most surprising to find, on page 2, the claim that genetics can "explain why it is that offspring resemble their parents." As J. B. S. Haldane has pointed out, this is just what genetics does not do: it explains why individuals *differ* from one another. This lack of rigour makes it doubtful whether the book should be recommended to those studying elementary biology. S. A. B.

Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Human Genetics, Rome, September 6-12, 1961. Edited by **Luigi Gedda.** Rome, 1963. Istituto Gregorio Mendel. Volume II, Pp. 8* + 701-1343. Price 10,000 lire each volume; 22,000 lire the set of three volumes.

VOLUME I OF these *Proceedings* was described in the April issue of the REVIEW (**56,** 46). Volume II is devoted to the sessions on Genetic and Biochemical Aspects of Human Serum Factors; Blood Groups; Clinical Genetics; Chromosome Genetics; Cancer, Leukemia and Ionizing Radiations, and consists of some 140 papers of varying length, many of them by two or more collaborators.

As Professor Gedda points out in his Introduction to the second volume, the value of a symposium such as this lies in the diversity of opinion and outlook of its many contributors. Medical genetics is in its infancy and is rapidly developing; time will show which of the varying hypotheses are right or wrong.

The Editor expresses himself as gratified by the welcome given to the first volume; this was certainly deserved, and will no doubt be accorded to Volume II, whose contents are equally valuable.

Volume III will be devoted to the remaining seven sessions of the Congress, closing with that concerned with genetic counselling and public health. K. H.